

The Strangest Episode of the War



The Handsome and Fascinating Madame Herail, Shot Dead by Her Husband Because She Would Not Obey Orders and Leave His Encampment.

How Captain Herail, a Brave French Cavalry Officer and Loving Husband, Shot His Wife Because She Loved Him Too Well and Was Acquitted for His Deed With Applause

and a seductive personality, when not enraged.

The Captain is a man of middle height, strongly built, his thick hair brushed back, his complexion ruddy, altogether a good type of the cavalry officer. A reddish mustache adds to the impression of physical vigor, but his manner is gentle.

The address of the prosecuting attorney showed that on November 23 last the regiment of cavalry to which the captain belonged had been withdrawn from the front and sent to camp at Compiègne for a period of rest, after extremely severe fighting in Lorraine and in the north, where the regiment had lost heavily and performed their duty in a very gallant manner. Captain Herail, for his bravery, was recommended by his superiors for the cross of knight of the Legion of Honor.

Paris, May 8.

PROBABLY the most astonishing murder trial ever held, has just been concluded in Paris. A loving husband was accused of murdering his wife because she loved him too much, and not the least astonishing part of the whole affair was that although the crime was fully proved, the accused was acquitted unanimously and with applause.

Captain Edouard Anselme Jean Herail, of the Eleventh Regiment of French Hussars, but formerly of a cuirassier regiment, killed his wife at Compiègne, because she insisted on staying in a place where his regiment was encamped in defiance of military orders, which required that officers' wives must not visit them. Herail was threatened with disgrace for failure to obey orders.

Captain Herail was tried for the murder before a court-martial in Paris. The courtroom was crowded by a fashionable attendance, largely consisting of women, for the case involved most delicate and unique domestic problems, and the persons concerned were of high social position. The Captain's father was a prominent judge. His wife had one brother who won the Nobel Prize, and another brother is a well-known lawyer.

She was tall, slender, with a mass of titian red hair and large blue eyes. She had an artistic temperament

where the officers and soldiers of the regiment had lost heavily and performed their duty in a very gallant manner. Captain Herail, for his bravery, was recommended by his superiors for the cross of knight of the Legion of Honor.

Mme. Herail, who had been at Narbonne with her three children, learned three days after the regiment came to Compiègne that it was there. She hurried immediately to meet and embrace her husband, who was embarrassed by her presence from the beginning.

He felt obliged to take every means to hide the presence of his wife in the town, for a note from the commanding general of October 4 had absolutely forbidden the wives of officers to be with their husbands, and it was added that any infraction of the order would be severely punished. Much disorder and disregard of discipline had been caused in the army by the presence of wives and also of those who were not wives. In spite of this officers' wives had frequently broken the order and had settled down in the vicinity of the camp. Lieutenant-Colonel Meneville, commanding the Captain's regiment decided to call the attention of his officers a second time to the necessity of observing the rule.

It was in the midst of this already very delicate situation that Mme. Herail arrived to stay with her husband. He represented to her in the most affectionate manner that she

was breaking the orders of his superiors, but she met his remonstrances with a storm of indignant reproaches.

"Your superiors are not my superiors," exclaimed Mme. Herail, "and I owe them no obedience. Did one ever hear of such tyranny? Their orders are an outrage on personal liberty and the rights of a wife. There is no power in France that can make me leave my husband or keep my children away from their father."

Finally, Mme. Herail burst into tears and her husband, instead of pressing her to go, fell on her bosom and wept with her.

The colonel of the regiment, who learned that his orders and warnings were being disregarded by Mme. Herail, called his officers together again. He did not wish to appear to be striking especially at Captain Herail, for whom he had a high regard, and he told them all that very severe punishment would be inflicted on those who disobeyed the order. The disobedient, he said, would be sent back from the front, which under the circumstances would be a humiliating disgrace for a soldier.

Then he turned to Captain Herail and asked him to speak out "like a soldier and without beating about the bush" and tell him why his wife did not go away. Captain Herail endeavored to make an explanation, but instead of saying that he had been struggling vainly to make her go away, he tried, out of affection for his wife, to excuse her conduct and to offer special reasons why she should remain.

The colonel then lost his patience and inflicted fifteen days close arrest on the captain, and made a report to the general of the brigade that the captain should be sent back to the depot at Narbonne. The general approved the recommendation and in addition said that the captain should not receive the Cross of the Legion of Honor for which he had been recommended. The colonel ordered Major Bouchez, the immediate superior of Captain Herail, to keep the latter under arrest in his rooms at 26, rue de la Sous-Prefecture, Compiègne, where he lodged with Mme. Masson.

It was here that the climax of this unique drama occurred at about 8 o'clock in the evening. Major Bouchez came into Captain Herail's room. The latter's wife remained concealed in the next room. She heard everything that was said. Major Bouchez, who knew that she was there, raised his voice so that she could hear perfectly the reproaches which he addressed to his comrade. The interview lasted an hour and the major demonstrated fully to Captain Herail the terrible and disgraceful situation in which he would be placed, from a military point of view, at this supreme crisis of the French nation, if he did not obey orders by sending his wife away.

"You will be sent before a court martial," said Major Bouchez, "for refusing to obey the orders of your superiors. You will be struck from the list of the Legion of Honor, and you will be sent back from the front to the depot with the cripples and the old women. You would be better off if you were dead."

Captain Herail went into the next room and addressed his wife:

"You have heard what he has said? I must insist that you go away immediately. Go!"

"I will not go," said Mme. Herail, squaring her shoulders and settling down upon a divan.

"I give you the order to go immediately," repeated her husband with anger.

"As a matter of morality," said Mme. Herail, "you have no right to give me such an order."

"We are not in the domain of ab-

"I will never leave you alive. I love you too much, Jean," said Madame Herail. "Then you will leave dead," said Captain Herail, and fired three bullets through her head. —From a Sketch by the Parisian Artist, L. Durand.

stract morality," replied the husband, "but in the domain of civil and military law and you owe me obedience."

"If you give me that order, everything will be over between us for life, and anyhow, I will not obey the order," retorted Mme. Herail, with remarkable feminine logic.

"I give you two minutes to reflect," said the unfortunate captain, whose emotions were getting terribly wrought up.

He went back to the other room, where Major Bouchez was waiting for him, took up his service revolver, and then returned to his wife's room.

"Have you reflected? Is it no?" he asked, evidently anticipating his wife's immovable obstinacy.

"I will never leave you alive. I love you too much, Jean," said Madame Herail.

"Then you will leave dead," said Captain Herail.

Captain Herail then aimed point-blank at his wife with his revolver and fired three shots at her. She fell to the ground dead, all three of the bullets having passed through her head. Major Bouchez rushed in, saw the body, and, as he testified at the trial, found Captain Herail in tears and out of his mind with remorse.

Witnesses said that the sorrow of Captain Herail was intense. He was continually weeping, calling on the dead woman, and asking for his three children. It was proved that during the eleven years they were married he had shown the deepest affection for his wife, and it was only the military disgrace she had brought upon him that could have caused him to commit the act.

He was married to his wife in 1904 when he was a lieutenant in the First Regiment of Cuirassiers. She was then Mlle. Henriette Courel. They both belonged to wealthy families and their marriage was an event in fashionable society. They began life under the happiest auspices. They were apparently a well-matched couple. He was very good tempered and easy going, while she was a devoted wife and a model housekeeper, but very jealous and extremely exacting.

She required that her husband should have no interest in life apart from her. At the annual military manoeuvres she insisted on following him around, and he, from fear of being made ridiculous, asked her to stay away, but she would not do so. His comrades called her his colonel.

During the testimony relating to these facts Captain Herail's eyes were wet with tears, and finally, when it came to the description of the scene of the killing, he could not restrain himself at all and broke into heart-rending sobs.

Then the presiding officer ordered him to stand up and relate what he had to say in defence of his act. His tears continued to flow and at first he was unable to utter an intelligible sentence. He could be heard sobbing:

"My poor wife! My poor wife!"

After a time he was able to make a statement concerning his difficulties with his wife, of which these were the most striking passages:

"If she had only let me fulfill my military duties we should have been the happiest family possible. She was very good and very clever, but she never would permit me to be away from her."

The unfortunate captain, who had faced death from bullets, day after day for months, without a tremor,

while his comrades were falling all around him, broke down as he spoke of his dead wife and buried his nails in his flesh, unable to continue. The spectacle was an intensely painful one and caused nearly everybody in the audience to weep, including some of the officers on the bench.

"What could I do?" went on the poor captain when he had recovered some self-control. "I thought of handing in my resignation, and yet, I loved my calling, although my promotion had been slow. I remained thirteen years a simple lieutenant."

"Naturally, I appeared a careless officer, without ardor, constantly trying to get away from my daily duties. The truth is that my wife, every time I went out, urged me to return home as soon as possible, complaining that I was leaving her alone."

"I wished to give my resignation, although it was a hard prospect for me to leave the army a simple lieutenant without getting the Cross of the Legion of Honor. I did not tell my conjugal difficulties to any one."

"Then I was forced to abandon the idea of resigning, because my wife would not agree to such a solution. She was proud of the service I was in."

"Our third child had just been born when my squadron was ordered to start for the frontier of Morocco, where the war had just broken out. Suddenly my wife, though still in delicate health, announced that she would go with me, that she would make the campaign."

The captain continued the history of his curiously troubled married life up to the time of the outbreak of the present war. When he came to the recital of the tragedy at Compiègne he lost all control of himself. He said that the only thing with which he could reproach himself was having concealed from his military superiors the truth concerning his difficulties with his wife.

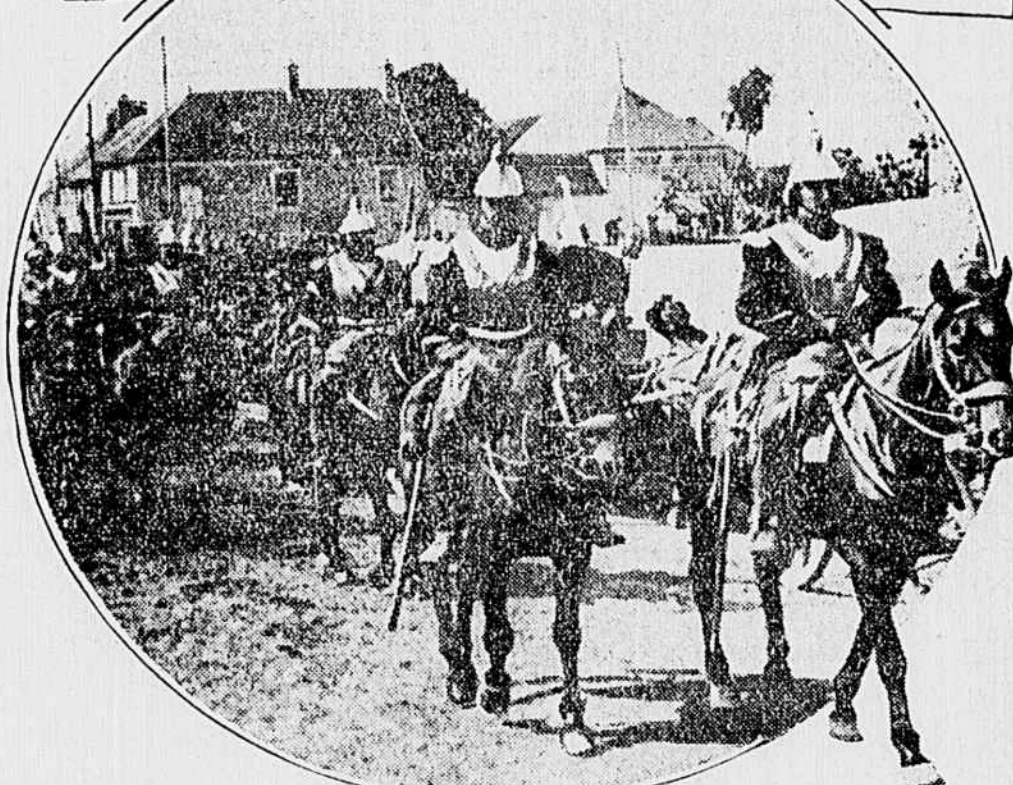
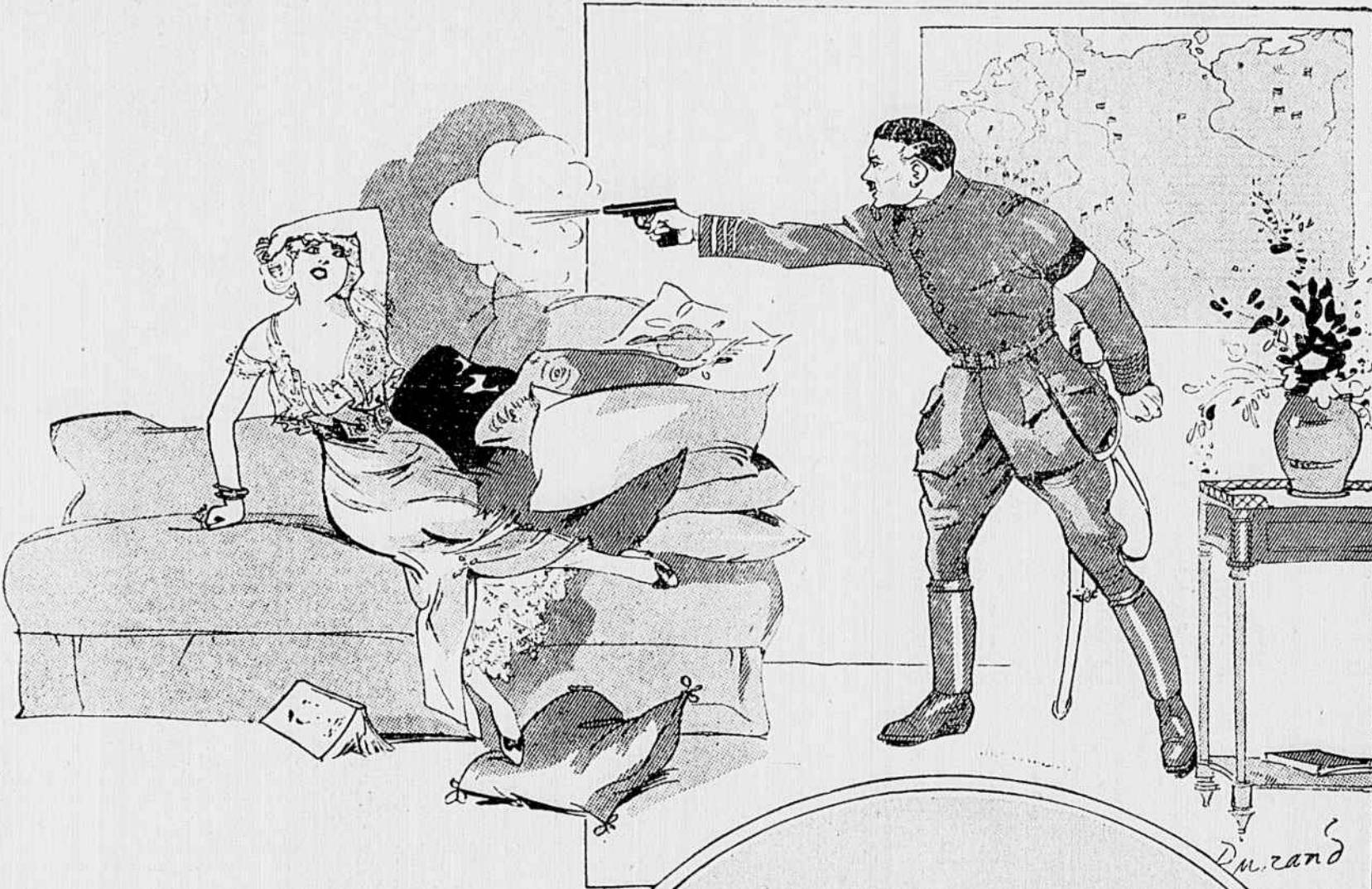
Colonel Jacquillart, the president of the court martial, asked Captain Herail sharply:

"Why did you not use some other method than shooting your wife to end the distressing situation?"

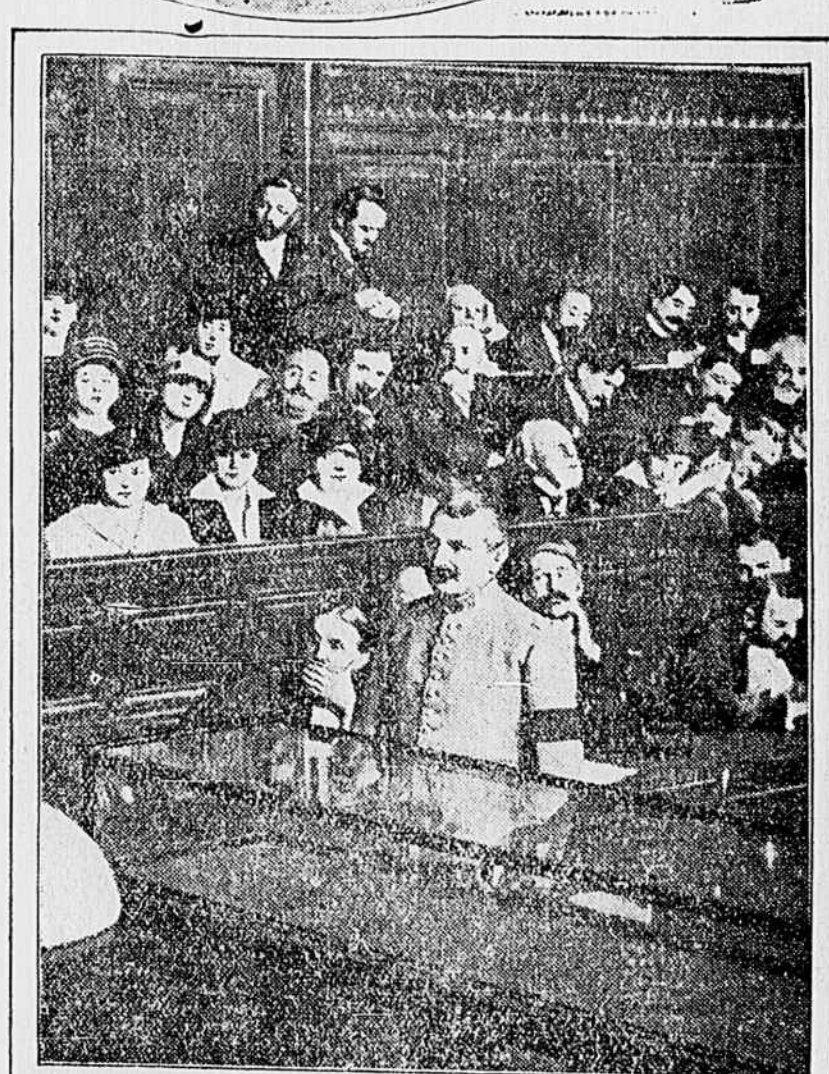
"I tried every other means first," replied the captain, "and I must have been mad with fear of disgrace to kill the wife I loved so much."

Many military officers testified and gave Captain Herail a splendid character. Colonel Meneville, who had recommended that the captain should not receive the Legion of Honor on account of his disobeying the order to send wives away, said that in every other respect Herail was an excellent officer, brave and competent.

Henri Robert, the most noted



Captain Herail With His Regiment Proceeding to the Front in the North of France.



The Trial of Captain Herail in Paris, Attended by a Throng of Fashionable Women and Prominent Men, Deeply Interested in the Unheard of Domestic Situation It Revealed.

member of the Paris Bar, defended Captain Herail eloquently.

"A judge far more inexorable than any of you," said M. Robert, pointing to the bench, "his mother-in-law, has forgiven him. She writes me lauding him as an ideal man and officer and worthy of his country. His dead wife's sisters and brothers

also forgive him freely."

The members of the court martial took only fifteen minutes to reach a decision. They returned and rendered unanimously a simple verdict of "Not guilty!"

The verdict was received with frantic applause mingled with tears by the audience.

How to Make Screws Hold

WHERE screen doors and many other objects are held in place for a while with screws which penetrate soft wood, the screw holes become worn and cannot hold the screw tightly, necessitating making new holes and moving hinges, etc., which always disfigures the premises.

To avoid all such difficulty paint the inside of the screw holes by means of a very small brush or a slim stick or bit of twisted rag with ordinary paint. Do this a day or two before the screws are to be placed, and the paint will make the wood solid and fill up the cavity enough to

make the screws fit firm. The same should be done when the screws are removed, at another season, such as in Autumn, when screen doors are taken down.

This will protect the wood, keep out the moisture and keep it from decaying, and the holes will be in much better condition when the time arrives for their use again. Many times the hinges have to be removed and replaced, and this little precaution will save many a worry and oft-times expense and much loss of time and patience. Screens so hung will not sag or become crooked as easily as where the screw holes are unpainted.